

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECRET

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

REPORT

SUBJECT 1. Unidentified Industrial Installation
2. In Strazske-Presov Railroad line

DATE DISTR. 31 May 1954

NO. OF PAGES 3

REQUIREMENT

REFERENCES

DATE OF INFO.

PLACE ACQUIRED

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1. The buildings of the new project, overtly stated to be a 'Drevokombinat' (Lumber Combine), lie between the towns of Kucin and Nizni Hrabovec, (R49/E65) north of the Presov - Strazske state road and north of the new double-track railroad between the latter towns. The Ondava river flows about 150 meters to the east of the site and its bed has been regulated. The river forms a large curve round the factory.
2. Surveying began in 1947, when a special commission was sent from Prague to select a suitable site. The same year the ground was strengthened by so-called concrete injections: the ground was turned up to a depth of more than 10 meters and liquid concrete was poured into narrow shafts under great pressure. This was to prevent a later subsidence of the ground.
3. Construction of the factory itself began in 1948. A connecting road was built from the Vranov - Nizni Hrabovec state road. Preliminary work was completed in 1950, but excavation continues even today, because the factory is still in the construction stage.
4. The ground was first excavated in the places where they had not built any concrete water supply canals as was done in the eastern part of the enclosure. The ground was uncovered by excavators to a depth of 15 meters. The sides of the water canals slope inwards towards the bottom. Their measurements at the top are about 30 meters wide, at the bottom about 15 meters, length 80 meters. There are five of them in all. They have not yet been connected to the Ondava river. The mouth of the canals is about 20 meters from the river. One of the canals was badly laid out and after inspection by experts had to be filled in. The expenses involved were estimated at about 500,000 Kcs. In addition, several engineers were arrested and the affair was denounced in the press as sabotage. The water level of the river is about six meters higher than that of the planned canals. The Ondava is regulated and has artificially raised banks. the water canals are to be used for moistening materials before use.

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5. In 1951 the whole enclosure was surrounded by wire fencing on concrete posts, about 3 meters high.
6. About 200 meters above the old Vranov-Strazske state road, which divides the enclosed site into two parts, there are two one-story storage buildings, built of reinforced concrete, 150 x 40 x 10 meters, with sloping metal roofs. On both the long sides of the buildings there are rows of metal shutters, which, when drawn back, open along the entire length of the building on both sides. Both buildings are to serve as storing and drying sheds for lumber. The ground around both stores has been paved to a width of about 10 meters.
7. About 200 meters further to the north of the two storage buildings, there is a reinforced concrete building with a vaulted roof, 60 x 30 x 20 meters. This is a future production hall. The reinforced concrete structure is filled in with glass plates, strengthened with wire. Entrance to the production room is from two sides. A railroad track runs round this production hall. The surrounding area has been paved to a width of 10 meters. [REDACTED]
8. Adjoining the production hall, a tall chimney for the works furnaces was completed in 1952. The height of the chimney is 103 meters, and is an excellent point for orientation. It is easily seen from a distance of 40 km. A few wooden huts stand around the production hall.
9. In the northwest corner of the factory three one-story buildings have been completed for the future factory administration. They are of masonry and measure 30 x 8 meters.
10. East of these buildings is a row of houses for the employees.
11. About 100 meters to the south of these, there is a brick building for a high tension transformer station for the needs of the lumber combine. The current is supplied by the Vranov distribution station, which obtains it from the Kosice and Krompachy power stations. A current of 110 volts enters the transformer station. A line of the old high tension, 22,000 volts grid leading to Michalovce was put out of action and only part of it now reaches beyond this site. A new high tension line of 22,000 volts has been erected from Vranov to Michalovce.
12. The project is still in the construction stage and the ground is constantly being excavated in the canal area, and underground halls of large dimensions are being built to a depth of about 50 cm. (sic), their roofs made of a layer of reinforced concrete. The area of these underground projects is drained by a pipe into the Ondava river.
13. The CSSZ (Czechoslovak Construction Works) in Humenne is in charge of the project. It is managed by about 40 engineers and experts, mostly of Czech nationality, sent from Prague. [REDACTED]
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- 25X1 [REDACTED] All plans and orders in connection with the construction come direct from Prague. About 2,000 people are employed on the construction, including about 400 members of the TNP (Labor Battalion) which is not far from the town of Vranovska Dlhe. Slovaks, Hungarians and Ruthenians work on the construction. Women are also employed, but only in the administration.
14. In July 1952, a commission of Russian experts visited the site to examine progress and working methods, and at the same time, to look into sanitary conditions.
15. Three shifts are worked on the construction. The project is part of the Five-Year Plan, but under no circumstances can it be finished within the time limit of the plan. The monthly plan was generally fulfilled 80%, sometimes only 70% or 60%.

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16. The workers all think that the project has some other purpose than that officially stated. It is generally thought that the underground halls are to serve some important purpose, perhaps as a munitions factory or as storage for ammunitions. The whole area is guarded by the factory militia and only employees who have work passes are allowed to enter. At the two entrances there are six factory militia guards. On the fences there are notices warning that it is forbidden to photograph the site. Inside the factory, there is an SNB unit, and in the administrative buildings. The building site is supplied with well water and telephones have been installed in all the buildings.
17. The new Strazske-Presov double-track railroad line was built in 1944, but in 1945 it was destroyed in many places by the retreating German Army. After the war, it was again put into working order. In the Nechor Nizni Hrabovec Strazske it goes through a tunnel under a wood east of Nizni Hrabovec. The line crosses a bridge across the Ondava river which was rebuilt after the war. The bridge is of iron, 20 meters long, with two arches and two supporting pillars five meters above the river.

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